

KAUR

An alternative radio station

by KRIS LANGSTRAAT
staff writer

On any given day, you have a choice of radio stations to which you can listen. Any of the commercial radio stations will do, or perhaps public radio. But there is an alternative to these choices which has music and programming unlike any other station in town--KAUR.

KAUR is the campus radio station of Augustana. It is a student operated, educational, non-commercial radio station which provides alternative music for a listening audience within a 30 mile radius of Sioux Falls.

KAUR has achieved surprising success when ranked against other Sioux Falls radio stations, says Dr. Michael Pfau, academic advisor for KAUR. "In periodic ratings, KAUR outperforms many commercial radio stations," he said.

The station is run by students and receives little supervision from anyone besides the students. Students come to work at KAUR by either volunteering or (more commonly) by receiving a credit (SPDR 90) for working at the station. During the summer, the staff is composed mainly of volunteers such as high school students.

Pete Spillum, an Augustana junior has broadcasted basketball games for KAUR for three years and has found KAUR to be

helpful in getting hands-on experience in broadcasting. Spillum said, "Sports broadcasting for KAUR has helped me to understand a portion of the media field and has helped me to hit a wide spectrum in communications."

KAUR's DJ's are required to play strictly alternative, or "cutting edge" music. "The DJ's can't play anything that is played at any other station in town," says KAUR music director, Tom Binger. This means that there is no top 40 or mainstream classic rock played on KAUR.

This leaves the station with a unique play list. The programs on KAUR include light, alternative music from 6 a.m. to noon on weekday mornings, jazz from noon to 6 p.m., and kaleidoscope programs (which can feature a variety of alternative music) on weeknights. KAUR also features "Virgin Vinyl" every weeknight, which highlights new albums and compact discs.

Weekend programming includes heavy metal Friday nights, a folk wave show on Saturday mornings (which has received "surprisingly good ratings" according to station general manager, Melissa Moyar) and "Vintage Vinyl" which plays unique, classic rock and roll not found on commercial radio stations.

KAUR gets its music from smaller record companies that

send new music to the station. DJ's fill out a log sheet of the music they play which the co-music directors Binger and Kristi Weisz send to the College Music Journal. This journal compiles a "mini-top 40" of college radio station music.

KAUR receives most of its funding from Augustana but also receives grant announcements from some area businesses. Because of this, KAUR is neither a commercial nor a public radio station. It is an alternative radio station (basically offering an alternative to programming on other Sioux Falls radio stations).

KAUR began broadcasting on FM 89.1 in October of 1972, from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. It was located in a building called the Viking Villa, west of Stavig Hall. In 1981, KAUR expanded to a 15 mile radius of Sioux Falls from its previous Augustana only listening area. In 1986, KAUR purchased a new transmitter and began broadcasting from Tuve Hall. It also expanded its listening area to its present 30 mile radius.

If you are interested in working at KAUR they are always looking for volunteers. Applications are available in the KAUR office in Tuve Hall. For more information contact Moyar or any of the staff members at 336-KAUR.